

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 377 567

EA 026 363

AUTHOR Lockwood, Anne Turnbaugh
TITLE The Future of Public Education.
INSTITUTION Wisconsin Center for Educational Research, Madison.
National Center for Effective Schools.
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 22p.; Final issue of newsletter.
AVAILABLE FROM Wisconsin Center for Education Research, National
Center for Effective Schools, University of
Wisconsin-Madison, 1025 W. Johnson St., Suite 685,
Madison, WI 53706.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Viewpoints
(Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
JOURNAL CIT Focus in Change; n16 Fall 1994
EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Change; Educational Improvement;
*Educational Objectives; *Educational Trends;
Effective Schools Research; Elementary Secondary
Education; *Futures (of Society); Public Schools;
School Effectiveness

ABSTRACT

This final issue draws to a close the quarterly, "Focus in Change" and its companion, "Research and the Classroom." Approximately, the theme is the future of public education, asking four educational leaders what such a future may hold. The views of the following people are presented: (1) Michael W. Apple, John Bascom Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; (2) Thomas A. Romberg, Sears Roebuck Foundation-Bascom Professor in Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; (3) James A. Banks, Professor of Education and Director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, Seattle; and (4) Stephen K. Miller, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations at the University of Louisville. They were asked the following questions: (1) What impact, if any, will the Goals 2000 legislation have on public education? (2) What has been accomplished in the past 25 years? (3) What has been learned about schooling that can inform future reform efforts? (4) What works and what doesn't? (5) What is the wisest agenda for the future, and how best to pursue the course? and (6) What words of hope can be offered to America's teachers? The publication concludes with commentaries by Florence L. Johnson, Director of the National Center for Effective Schools, and Anne Turnbaugh Lockwood, Communications Director for the Center. (LMI)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *



FOCUS IN CHANGE

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

FALL 1994 NO.16

ED 377 567

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

* Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL
IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN
GRANTED BY

A. Lockwood

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 026 363



FOCUS IN CHANGE

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

FALL 1994 NO.16

Preface to the final issue:

The Future of Public Education

In this final issue of FOCUS IN CHANGE, we look to the future of public education—and ask educational leaders what it may hold. Not only do we question what may unfold for public education, but we examine where we have been and what we have accomplished.

The educational leaders featured in this issue were chosen carefully to reflect a variety of perspectives—from a past president of a teachers' union (now professor) to a pioneer in the national standards movement to a school effectiveness proponent to an authority on multicultural education. To discover where they agree and where they differ, we asked them similar questions: What impact, if any, will the Goals 2000 legislation have on public education? What have we accomplished in the past 25 years? What have we learned about schooling that can inform our future reform efforts? What works? What doesn't? What is the wisest agenda for the future, and how best can we set our course? Finally, since school staff face negative publicity, increased public disaffection for public schooling, and mounting societal problems that are etched clearly on the faces of their students, we asked for words of hope for America's teachers. *[To aid readers, we provide a sidebar that lists the Goals 2000 on page 6.]*

We begin with the views of Michael W. Apple, John Bascom Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies at the

University of Wisconsin—Madison. Professor Apple sounds an alarm about the current direction of education policy. Dismissing the Goals 2000 legislation as empty rhetoric, he points out the lack of a societal infrastructure to support schools and sketches a scenario of the future that heads public schools inexorably toward privatization.

Next, we hear from Thomas A. Romberg, Sears Roebuck Foundation—Bascom Professor in Education at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, where he also directs the National Center for Research in Mathematical Sciences Education for the U.S. Department of Education. Internationally recognized for his work in mathematics curriculum reform, and especially for his leadership in the development of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics *Standards*, Professor Romberg approaches the future with pragmatism tempered with optimism. Major changes in the governance and financing of schools are necessary, he believes, before major curriculum reform can be successful. However, he encourages school staff to begin their own change efforts—and provides examples of how such efforts might unfold.

For a perspective on the gains and needs of multicultural education, we turn next to James A. Banks, Professor of Education and Director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, Seattle. Professor Banks has spent his career working to help educators accomplish what he calls a different way of thinking, knowing, and perceiving—what he believes is the essence of

multicultural education. He celebrates the accomplishments of the past 25 years in the areas of equity and human rights, and sets out a carefully constructed slate of long-term goals for multicultural education. While he applauds the substantive changes in schools and society that have occurred since 1969, he repeats the poignant question of Rodney King: "Can we all get along?" and replies: "The verdict is still out."

Last, we talk to a proponent of school effectiveness research to gain that perspective of the past and future of education reform. Stephen K. Miller, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations at the University of Louisville, and long-time proponent of school effectiveness research, provides a retrospective of the original effective schools research and describes its contributions to the current era of education reform. Explaining how the original effective schools research burgeoned into the current school effectiveness research, Miller clarifies the difference between a staff development program based on the effective schools research and other staff development programs, and emphasizes that we must invest much more in children at early ages so that they are prepared—and insulated—to move ahead in school and in society.

We conclude this final issue with an *Endpaper* by Anne Turnbaugh Lockwood and the views of NCES Director Florence L. Johnson, in her final *Commentary*.

A suggestion for our readers: Save this issue and refer to it in a decade to see if the predictions expressed in it have come to pass and if the agenda set for the future has been met.

EXPORTING THE BLAME

ANNE TURNBULL LOCKWOOD

What does the future hold for public education? Will the Goals 2000 legislation have a significant impact on the course of public education? What will be the impact of multicultural education? In this article, Michael W. Apple, John Bascom Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, presents his scenario of the future and rebuts assertions that the Goals 2000 legislation—and other similar reforms—take public education in the United States on the proper path. A former elementary and secondary school teacher and past president of a teachers' union, Professor Apple has worked with institutions and groups of people throughout the world to democratize educational research, policy, and practice. He has written extensively on the relationship between education and differential power. Among his more recent books are *Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age* (Routledge, 1993) and *Democratic Schools* (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, forthcoming).

To Michael Apple, the Goals 2000 legislation passed by Congress is only the tip of a sinister iceberg—one that suggests that public education is running on a blind and disastrous course similar to that of the Titanic. "The belief behind the Goals 2000 legislation is that simply establishing goals will lead to achievement, and that is a fiction," Apple begins.

The main problem that schools experience currently, he says, has little to do with goal-setting but much to do with the lack of a societal infrastructure. "We have to remember that we live in the real world," Apple

states. "The money to implement all these national standards and the national testing that is the inevitable outcome of the standards is not there."

In his analysis of the national standards and testing movement, he does not mince words. "All of this is a way of exporting the blame," he asserts. "Outside schools, there are few jobs in the inner cities that are respected and in some cases there are no jobs at all. The very notion that we should have these goals in a time of economic crisis where there is not going to be any funding for schools beyond the minimal is a joke."

Dissecting the logic—and rhetoric—behind the Goals 2000 legislation, Apple is clear that he sees the legislation as a red herring detracting from the real issues affecting the future of public education. "We have immensely high rates of under- and unemployment in local communities. Many are saying that the reason for this under- and unemployment is because the schools have low standards. They believe that the way to insure that we do better economically is to have standardized goals and to make certain that every child comes to school ready to learn."

But he is impatient with what he sees as convoluted logic as well as sloganistic rhetoric. "What does it mean to come to school ready to learn?" he asks. "You must have a sense of future, you must have nutrition, you must have health care, you must have housing, you must have parents who have jobs. But none of those factors are being changed."

He points to many schools in urban and also some rural communities that are in severe financial straits. "There are schools throughout urban America where classes are held in toilets, in hallways, in gymnasiums, anywhere. To assume that simply having more testing and more coherent goals will

do anything more than establish one more mechanism with which we can label poor kids as stupid is not practical."

A Scenario of the Future

Apple believes that the Goals 2000 legislation is an uneasy compromise between three different—and powerful—groups. "Think of the legislation as an umbrella with a lot of people who have to fit underneath it," he explains. "One has to ask: 'Who is holding the umbrella?'"

"Most of the reforms being proposed are compromises between two or three groups. First are the neoconservatives who want strong control over everything, especially over the Western tradition, over a return to standards, values, and a national curriculum. That compromises with an ethic of local control but they view local control as privatization, as allowing parents choice over schools.

"Next, there are neoliberals. They feel that schools are much too bureaucratic, but by and large they believe that schools should meet the needs established by economically powerful groups."

A third and very influential group of key players includes those he terms "authoritarian populists"—people whose political and philosophical convictions are far to the right of center. "This group consists of right-wing Christian fundamentalists who are mistrustful of big government, mistrustful of national curriculum. They want schools to be insurance policies to guarantee that their kids will end up with jobs. They also want guarantees that their culture will be respected. Local control sounds good to them but it is local control for a market. The market will enable 'Christian' values to be taught."

Apple tartly summarizes their belief system: "Public is bad. Private is good. Public is inefficient; it is socialistic. Private enterprise is good."

But privatizing schools will lead to increased polarization between social classes and minority groups. "Increased educational apartheid," Apple insists, "will result. All of these privatization formulas are actually a formula not for school choice but *schools'* choice, meaning the schools will choose those kids with the highest test scores and will not deal with kids who are developmentally challenged in any way."

Educational Research and Reform

Where does Apple place educational researchers in the restive coalition he outlines? How do their findings influence, contradict, or contribute to educational policy decisions currently being formed? In his reply, Apple first acknowledges their good intentions.

"There is a group that is part of what might be called the new middle class: managers, efficiency experts, administrators, R & D people, who are deeply committed to tighter control, and to efficient solutions to educational problems," he notes. "These people often are wedded to making schools more oriented to time-on-task, more oriented to achievement scores measured in standardized ways."

"Then there are the people involved in the restructuring movement—classic liberals. They are still wedded to efficiency but they want efficiency as it is shown in higher test scores without worrying whose knowledge is taught. Their task is to make schools more responsive so that we have higher test scores."

He adds: "I feel more comfortable with these people, but their vision of society is relatively naive."

Apple presents an admittedly dark scenario for the future. "We will

centralize in order to privatize," he predicts. "Here is how it will unfold. We are on our way toward a national curriculum. A national curriculum is simply a stalking horse for national testing. Once there is a national test, it will be possible to put price tags on schools which will be like quality control devices."

The "price tags" Apple refers to are labels of quality that will lead to greater white flight, a dull and increasingly pointless curriculum, and even lower student achievement. "But," he warns, "we will say that we tried that solution and there is only one solution left. It is privatization. So national testing, the Goals 2000 legislation, and national curriculum standards actually are the first step towards privatization."

Is this push to privatize something inexorable toward which U.S. schools have been headed for the past twenty years? What can we look back upon as our accomplishments in public education? Have there been substantive changes to which we can point with pride? Or is our history actually quite discouraging?

Apple responds, "There are been major changes both positive and negative. The negative changes are these: What schools stand for has been dramatically altered. Schools are no longer for critical literacy, for community development, for being a broadly educated person. A lot of schools really weren't for those things but that was our rhetoric—social democratic rhetoric. More and more of these social democratic goals have been pushed aside."

"Now education is for international competition, profit and loss, and we have returned to what is called the creation of human capital. People are seen as employees and parents are seen as consumers. Now, the major audience is business and industry. This transformation in schools is truly negative. Education is seen as one more product among others, with the

world as a mass supermarket."

He indicates significant gains as well, but hesitates to attribute them directly to schools. "As an example, if I compared textbooks from thirty years ago to textbooks now, even though textbooks are more and more written for state adoption policies and to conform to tests, it would be very hard to find white faces painted Black."

"There have been gains in the knowledge about African American people, but not as much in the knowledge and communities of Latinos and Latinas. The Black struggle for freedom, the Latino and Latina struggle for freedom, the women's struggle for equal representation all have had a major impact."

"There have been major gains in terms of linking schools more closely to the community—although that has been turned in a right-wing direction in many places through voucher plans and choice plans. But the sentiment against bureaucracy is actually a progressive, populist sentiment with which I agree."

These changes have not occurred because of school people and their actions per se, Apple argues, but because of the pressure brought to bear upon schools by forces in the greater society. "Textbooks changed, relations between inner-city schools and communities of color changed because social movements pushed them to change. To understand the gains that have been made in the last twenty-five years, we need to recognize that social movements have pushed like crazy on the school. The same is true for the negative changes: social movements from the right have exerted considerable pressure on schools."

Apple takes heart in the development of schools that he calls "democratic schools that are moving toward more community-based curriculum decision-making, more relevant curriculum based on the cultures, histories, and languages of

parents, students, and community activists."

The Years to Come

What pressing issues face educators in the years to come? Which are immediate, and which will have long-lasting impact? Apple delineates constellations of issues, which he carefully groups together. "The decay of urban schools will continue," he says. "It is a pressing issue now, and will worsen because of my prediction that we will have educational apartheid even more as we move towards privatization, voucher plans, and school choice plans."

"Another issue related to that is the increasing impoverishment of the economic base of inner cities and rural areas. We are moving towards a society of have- and have-nots. That will worsen. The financing of public schools, the increasing corporatization of the economy so that we destroy the economic base of cities as corporations move out and the decay continues, all go together."

Another two issues that he connects are initiatives that will lead to privatization and the power of right-wing groups to influence educational policy. "We have to pay close attention to the right for two reasons," Apple cautions, "one, to defend the idea of public schools. They are under deep threat. The other is to listen to the criticisms that right-wing fundamentalist and other conservative groups are making."

In some cases, he says he agrees with points raised by the right. "Even though I'm fundamentally opposed to their position, the criticisms that they raise about bureaucracy, about schools not listening to parents and communities, are largely the correct criticisms."

"But the danger associated with the far right and the religious right in

particular should never be underestimated because they are winning at state levels increasingly and certainly at local levels. In order to protect schools against that, some school systems will move toward privatization plans even though they don't agree with them. This constellation of privatization, voucher, and choice plans and the connection they have to

in the textbooks."

Although he believes textbooks are far from perfect and actually have considerable ground to cover before they go beyond "mentioning" various groups or issues, he emphasizes that it is crucial to acknowledge that schools are not failures. "It is very important," he stresses, "that we not let the right define schools as failures."

We need to remember that schools have been places of democratic gains as well. Teachers haven't been stupid puppets; parents have not encouraged the teaching of bad stuff to their kids, and community activists have actually made major gains."

Perhaps the best word to characterize schools, he believes, is "contradictory." He says, "The curriculum contains good stuff and bad stuff, and it is in tension all the time because it is a compromise."

But he worries that the gains of multicultural education are not safe. "The negative and yet positive part of multicultural education is that it has shown very clearly that the curriculum is a political entity. Someone's knowledge is taught, and it is the question of whose knowledge is taught. Without the massive

pressure of people who feel under-represented in the curriculum, that would never have occurred."

Today, however, he is concerned that the multicultural movement has slowed down, diluted by a different philosophy. "Multiculturalism has turned into rhetoric about being a nation of immigrants. We need to remember that some people came here voluntarily, and others came in chains. The story of a nation of immigrants is a misreading of history and the histories of how different people have had many fewer choices. So, although there are gains, there are also losses. Multiculturalism has lost its critical edge."



MICHAEL W. APPLE

rightist fundamentalist groups is another set of related issues."

How does Apple assess the long-term impact of multicultural education? Will it leave a lasting legacy, or be a passing trend? He replies, "It has already left a legacy in a variety of ways, both positive and negative. Its positive legacy includes its effect on textbooks. When I want to show how far we've come in my curriculum classes, I take out a textbook from Boston 1902 and read the stories that were told in social studies about how 'colored people' should work or live in the South because they are biologically well-suited to working in the sun with no ill effects. That actually used to be

Is There Hope?

Many teachers feel they are confronted with almost insurmountable odds and yet continue to be blamed for all the problems that plague youth. Is there hope? "As a past president of a teachers' union and someone who taught in both urban and rural schools, I get angry when teachers are blamed for everything," Apple says with vehemence. "It is very important that teachers maintain hope because there are not just 'nos' out there, there are 'yeses' too."

"As an example, there are movements toward site-based management and site-based curriculum development. If these movements are taken seriously and not used as another way of exporting the blame, we could see a flowering of immensely effective schools. What we should not do is allow conservative forces to politicize these movements and say to teachers: 'We gave you democracy but we cut your budget and we added more and more for you to do and now we wonder why you can't solve the problem.'"

In spite of his alarm about the progress of educational reform, Apple prefers a hopeful, action-oriented agenda for teachers. "Teachers need to keep struggling and listen to the successes. Do not let the right, the neoliberals, and the neoconservatives tell you it is impossible. There are thousands of teachers throughout this country who are making a difference and it is crucial that those stories be told. Part of the task is finding ways to have teachers tell their stories."

Speaking directly to teachers, he adds: "Don't just listen to the media and to university researchers who are telling you what works and what doesn't. Find ways for teachers' unions and education activist organizations and others to get teachers in contact with each other so that they can share their experiences. It is crucial that teachers have hope, that they know that they actually make a difference."

The National Education Goals

- Goal 1: By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.
- Goal 2: By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.
- Goal 3: By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning and productive employment in our modern economy.
- Goal 4: By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.
- Goal 5: By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Goal 6: By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

Source: National Education Goals Panel. (1992). *Executive Summary*. Washington, DC: Author.

A PATH TO CHANGE

ANNE TURNBAUGH LOCKWOOD

Since the Goals 2000 legislation emphasizes the importance of standards for content and performance, we decided to learn more about the future of the national standards movement. What will the establishment of national, voluntary standards for content and performance accomplish? We sought the viewpoint of one of the nation's most prominent figures in the standards movement: Thomas A. Romberg, who is the Sears Roebuck Foundation—Bascom Professor in Education at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, where he also directs the National Center for Research in Mathematical Sciences Education for the U.S. Department of Education. Professor Romberg has a long history of involvement with mathematics curriculum reform, and is especially well-known for his work as chair of the Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics for the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

To Thomas Romberg, the importance of the Goals 2000 legislation lies not in its power to influence significant, broad-sweeping change in public education, but in the fact that it suggests a path toward change. "The Goals 2000 legislation is more of a call for direction for change than it is a method of producing the change," he says. "Education is still the responsibility of the states. Overall, the Goals 2000 legislation is still voluntary and does not have the resources available to force implementation."

Romberg predicts that the truly momentous changes in American public education will occur as a result of major shifts in the ways schools are governed and financed — changes that actually have nothing to do

with the Goals 2000 legislation. As he articulates the argument behind the Goals 2000 legislation, he also acknowledges that it will not be sufficient in accomplishing the change it lays out. "If states and school districts start to set high standards, change expectations, and change the assessment system, the argument is



THOMAS A. ROMBERG

that these important changes will occur," Romberg explains. Yet he quickly points out that the Goals 2000 legislation lacks the power to force compliance from schools. "It's nice rhetoric," he says dryly.

Nevertheless, he asserts that the development of national standards for content and performance — in which he has been a pioneering figure — is significant. "We need to develop frameworks and assessment systems based on standards," he says, "and it is important to note that the legisla-

tion does include the importance of staff development." However, the lack of resources available to schools to implement curricular programs and assessment schemes based on the standards is admittedly problematic.

Clearly, Romberg thinks of education — at least in part — in terms of supplying qualified workers for the marketplace in a time of increased global economic competition. But resources, he maintains, are far too slim for schools to accomplish even a part of the goals specified in the legislation. He selects an example from business. "When the American automobile industry was faced with a similar major crisis as foreign competitors began to take over the American market, they had to restructure and redo many things. They spent billions retraining people and retooling the industry. Something of the same level has to be done with education." He adds: "The legislation alone won't do that."

Not only are the resources not available, the massive change called for in the Goals 2000 legislation cannot occur instantly. Romberg enlarges on this theme: "As one of my friends says, 'It takes a generation — if everything is in place.' Everything is *not* in place.

The problem, of course, is that the governance of American schools is in the hands of local school boards, and the school board is probably the last agency under local control. Any changes that require a different governance structure really run into this, and into the fact that a variety of people get very upset if control is taken away from them."

He adds: "Unfortunately, a lot of local control remains fairly conservative in its outlook, wanting schools to be much like the schools of the 1930s and 1940s. Many people want

schools to be the way they were when they were in school, although the world itself has changed."

This misplaced nostalgia can have direct and disastrous effects on materials and pedagogy. Romberg recollects the dismay he experienced when noticing that the text one of his children used in a Spanish class was the same that he had used as a youngster. "A few things have happened since then," he points out.

Viewing the accomplishments of American public education over the past 25 years, Romberg believes that much has been learned. "We have a much better understanding of schools as political social agencies. We know a lot more about what it takes to motivate and engage students in productive learning."

But not all the knowledge gained over the past 25 years is positive, he is quick to point out. "We have learned a lot about things that *don't* work, probably more than anything else we have learned. Certainly we have learned that rote, drill, and practice do not necessarily give people any sense of the larger picture. We have learned that the social organization of the school is not geared to producing large numbers of students who are well-educated. The school serves certain social roles of maintaining class and cultural differences. In mathematics, for example, we know a lot about how the process of schooling filters students out of learning the important aspects of the subject."

He continues, "We have learned about some things that work very well but are awfully hard to implement. Unfortunately, the school isn't geared to deal with each student on an individual basis. It takes additional resources, it demands additional time, it means that teachers must care about all of the students — not just the best or the worst. To assume that a typical teacher can handle 150 students a day and keep track of each individually is nonsense. Also, it is clear that we can

do some things that will engage students and get them to learn more."

If we know what to do, why don't we do it? "The barriers are very steep," Romberg replies, "in terms of training teachers, keeping them up-to-date, changing their working conditions in useful ways. We have learned also that what we do in this country isn't what most other countries do."

Romberg agrees with the many critics who see American public education as lagging behind other industrialized countries. "We allocate about the same percentage of gross national product to education as most other countries, but we certainly allocate it in quite different ways, with different kinds of resources, with different kinds of expectations for students, for teachers, and for the working conditions of teachers."

Romberg explains: "The belief that teachers need three months off in the summer to help bring in crops is out-of-date. Nobody else does that, but it is part of our culture."

Romberg is particularly concerned about the working conditions faced by American teachers. "Elsewhere in the world teachers are paid twelve months a year and are expected to do things besides just facing kids. There are more resources available for their working conditions. Teachers are not expected to supervise lunch halls and parking lots. People do those tasks but they're not done by the professional teachers. Other countries expect teachers to spend time attending workshops or courses to upgrade their skills, and they have more expectations that they will work collaboratively with other teachers on various projects."

An Argument for Standards

What does he say to critics of national standards who see the standards movement as well-intentioned but unnecessary, or see it as a more sinister force? "Schools are social

agencies designed with expectations of transmitting culture to students, preparing them for the world of work or the world democratic society of the next century within which they will operate," he responds. "Within the notion that we do create schools with a purpose, there ought to be some set of expectations that we outline for all students."

In his eyes, the standards movement is an attempt to specify some of the expectations for student performance in order to ensure that they will be productive citizens of the 21st century. "It is important that these are not expectations based on what might have been appropriate at the turn of the last century," he emphasizes. "The world has changed. The kinds of expectations that one might have had for students in mathematics in the 1920s—which dealt primarily with shopkeeper arithmetic and a few students doing more than that—are no longer adequate."

"In the case of the NCTM *Standards*, the document represented the math community's notion of reasonable expectations for all students; that they ought to have an opportunity to learn some algebra, some geometry, and be able to solve a range of problems."

Romberg claims that the glare of the public spotlight could have a blighting effect on other standards efforts. "We were working on standards before it became popular to do standards," he explains. The math community also took nearly a decade to develop its standards, compared to much shorter time frames under which other content areas now work in the push to create their standards. Is this problematic?

"Yes," Romberg agrees, "that and having to operate in the open all of the time. It makes you very self-conscious about what you are saying and how you are saying it. There is another problem: Who makes the decision about what the standards should be?"

He explains how different camps want different things out of the standards movement, illustrating with his experience in mathematics. "University specialists in the field think they have a right to say what the discipline is all about. When we developed the NCTM *Standards*, our dominant group was the math supervisor level people who work with teachers regularly, not teacher educators, but people at the supervisor level. Now, there are many who complain that something wasn't included in the standards. Within the math community, that stems primarily from some university mathematicians who think we were placing too much emphasis on all students and not enough on the good student who is likely to continue into advanced mathematics. This is probably true. I understand it, but they fail to see that the elite is a relatively small percentage of the total population that we need to deal with in public schools."

Despite his dedication to the standards already developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics—and the work he currently pursues developing the NCTM assessment standards—Romberg turns the focus of his concern about the future to the financing of schools. "We must change the ways schools are financed," he insists. "We need better political leadership and we need to break down several barriers, such as the way we go about licensing teachers."

Absolutely adamant that teachers need what he terms "refreshment," Romberg reasons: "We don't let doctors practice unless they keep up-to-date, but we certainly let teachers practice in many states. In fact, even in states that require a certain number of credits after licensure, it doesn't mean that one's current practice is improved. Instead, the credits can be fulfilled through participating in workshops."

"This is not," he emphasizes, "a

systematic approach to teacher improvement."

Is Romberg hopeful about the future of public education? He pauses, and then says candidly, "There are days that I am very pessimistic. I think that teachers and schools need to realize that change is going to take a long time. We can begin to work on pieces of the change, whether it means changing assessment practices, changing staff development requirements, or changing the working conditions in some schools."

However, in his work at the National Center for Research in Mathematical Sciences Education, Romberg has observed many teachers eager to take the next step—an encouraging portent for the future. "There are a lot of dedicated people," he notes, "but frequently they run into a variety of barriers. Some of these barriers exist simply because they have been present for years."

And the profound isolation of teachers in conventionally structured schools serves to stultify many promising reforms, he asserts. Through working together—even on initiatives that might seem too small to make a difference—a considerable amount can be achieved, he says. "In one of the schools in which we worked with the Urban Math Collaboratives, the math faculty assumed some of the responsibility for assigning kids to classes, rather than leaving it to guidance counselors or computers."

This seemingly small change turned the math faculty in a collaborative direction. "They refused to list teachers' names by any of the classes in high school. They rotated faculty and worked out who would do what and where it would be done. They worked to utilize the strengths of the faculty."

The desire to change education in its current format must include changing the working conditions of teachers and mitigating against their isolation, Romberg stresses. "Teachers

are in a much stronger position to make many changes if they work together," he says. "The heroic isolate working alone, trying to make changes in the school that are not supported by other teachers or the faculty ends up burning out."

"We find many schools anxious and ready to make many of the changes necessary, but they don't know how to do it."

If a school is embarking upon an ambitious program of reform, is it always necessary to hire an outside "expert" to assist in their efforts? "No," Romberg replies firmly. "I don't think it is at all necessary to have outside experts."

Instead, he points to the recommendation made by the Mathematical Sciences Education Board at the beginning of the present reform in mathematics. "We recommended a year of dialogue, a year for teachers and faculty to meet, talk, and discuss ideas before beginning to do a lot of detailed actions."

A starting point for the dialogue is a simple question: "Where can we tackle the problems we face first? As an example, one school that we dealt with said that the connections standard was very interesting. They had never really thought about problems that connected various aspects of mathematics to social studies or science. They worked to build a few connections in every course, meeting for three to four months. The next year they began to do all sorts of things between science classes and social studies classes—wherever there were problems they could investigate using mathematics."

To Romberg, the most important point is not the scope of their efforts, but the power of collaboration—a theme he returns to again and again, urging it upon teachers. "These teachers began in a small way, but they *began*—and please note it was teachers in the plural, not a single teacher acting alone."



WHOSE UNUM?

ANNE TURNBAUGH LOCKWOOD

*What impact has multicultural education had thus far on society? What are its long-term goals? What have we accomplished in the areas of equity and human rights in the past 25 years? We posed these and other questions to James A. Banks, the distinguished scholar of multicultural education, who is professor of education and director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington—Seattle. He has written or edited 14 books on multicultural education and on social studies education, and his latest (with Cherry A. McGee Banks), *The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, is forthcoming from Macmillan in January 1995.*

In 1986, Professor Banks was named a Distinguished Scholar/Researcher on Minority Education by the American Educational Research Association and received its Research Review Award in 1994. He is a past President of the National Council for the Social Studies. In addition, he has served as a consultant to school districts, professional organizations, and universities throughout the United States and in Canada, Great Britain, the Virgin Islands, Guam, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Australia.

To James A. Banks, the Goals 2000 legislation is much more a political document than a realistic blueprint for the nation's schools—and he warns that the dangers of setting unrealistic goals are significant. Emphasizing that in only six years we will reach the millennium, Banks says wryly: "These goals are the equivalent of saying that I will walk from Seattle to Chicago in an hour."

It is not possible to achieve the goals set out by the year 2000, Banks believes. "Clearly any thoughtful observer must realize that these goals are not attainable by the year 2000,

given the enormous problems within our nation's schools and also the widening gap between the rich and the poor. All children will *not* start school ready to learn in six years. Nor will all children in the U.S. be the first in the world in science and math achievement within six years."

Although the goals may be unrealistic, in what way might they be dangerous? Banks voices his concern that faced with enormous goals—and only six years to accomplish them with slim resources—many may give up entirely, overwhelmed by a sense of futility. "This is always a danger of goals that are unrealistic," he cautions.

However, if the Goals 2000 legislation provokes a dialogue among educators, that may be one positive effect on education. "If these goals start a dialogue, a discussion, a conversation about educational realities and educational possibilities, that may be a possible positive effect. To some extent," Banks observes, "this already has occurred."

Realistic educational goals are not difficult to set, Banks insists, rapidly naming two attainable goals. "For instance," he says, "we could decide to reduce the dropout rate for Mexican-American students, or reduce the level of violence in schools. Whatever we do as educators, our goals need to be more modest, more realistic, and more attainable."

Looking to the past 25 years, Banks clearly takes pride in what has been accomplished thus far in the areas of equity and human rights—areas to which he has devoted his professional career. "We need to recognize, celebrate, and reflect about our accomplishments," he says, "because they have been significant and landmark in many ways."

"Most importantly, as a nation we have become more aware of, sensitive to, and knowledgeable about the

inequities within our society as they relate to women, people of color, low-income people, and people with disabilities. Our awareness level has increased astonishingly."

Legislation has nudged public awareness of and sensitivity to inequities, he points out—in particular Title IX and the Education For All Handicapped Children Act. "Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendment—which prohibits discrimination in all educational programs receiving federal assistance, including gender equity—was a landmark and significant development related to gender equity. Also, the 1975 Public Law 94-142 enacted by Congress—The Education For All Handicapped Children Act—was unprecedented and revolutionary in its implications. For example, it requires free public education for all children with disabilities, non-discriminatory evaluation, and an individualized plan or IEP for each student with a disability."

The curriculum has changed as well to respond to the rights of people of color, women, and ethnic groups. One particularly significant development—not to be minimized—is that teachers' awareness of issues related to equity has increased dramatically. "Today, in teacher education programs there are multicultural education requirements and textbooks. Our presence is now recognized," Banks notes. "We are not as invisible. Our voices are heard more frequently."

Textbooks have changed as well. "Since 1969, there has been a substantial change in textbooks in terms of the ways they reflect racial, ethnic, and class diversity in American society. While they still need to improve, there is no question that the textbooks of today much better reflect diversity in our society than those 25 years ago."

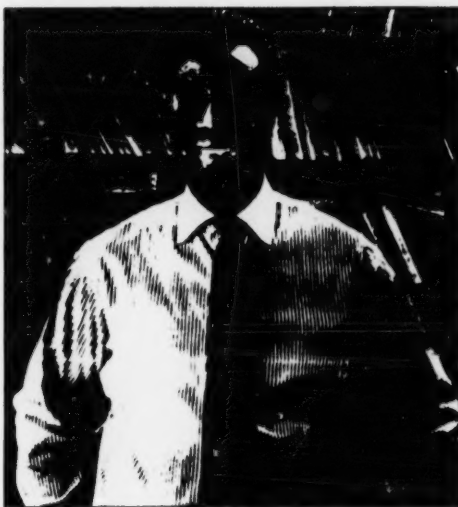
How shall multicultural educators build upon the achievements of the last 25 years? What should be the long-term goals for multicultural education? Why does multicultural education continue to be necessary? Banks points first to the student population of the future. "By the year 2020," he observes, "almost half the students in school will be students of color. By 2020, if current growth trends continue, students of color will make up about 46% of the nation's school-age youth."

Most immigrants, he points out, already come primarily from Latin America and Asia—and this pattern will persist. "Only 11% of our present immigrants come from Europe," he states. "From 1981 to 1986, 85% of the legal immigrants who settled in the U.S. came from Latin America and Asia. By the turn of the century, one out of four people in the U.S. will be people of color."

This demographic pattern means that multicultural education must redouble its efforts to ensure that different groups of people can live peacefully together in a democratic society. "Multicultural education," Banks believes, "can help us live together in a civic moral community. I do not think we have reached that civic moral community yet."

"Our motto is: *e pluribus unum*, out of many, one. But the question is, whose *unum*? Right now that *unum* is shaped too much by a small group of European American males in their own image. The real challenge for our nation is how we will create an authentic *unum* that reflects the *pluribus*. As Rodney King asked: 'Can we all get along?' The verdict is still out."

There are distinct long-term goals for multicultural education as it attempts the massive task of facilitating a civic moral community, and Banks lays them out with careful



JAMES A. BANKS

precision. "The first critical area is content integration, or continuing the effort to infuse the curriculum with ethnic content. That whole agenda is still incomplete. Second, we need to continue to implement strategies dealing with knowledge construction, teaching kids how knowledge is constructed and produced. Thirdly, we need to continue to work on the equity pedagogy dimension of multicultural education by implementing teaching strategies that cater to the needs of students of color and girls. Fourth, we must work to reduce prejudice. Fifth, we have much work to do to create a school culture and social structure that empowers kids from all cultures and both gender groups."

Of the five dimensions, Banks believes the most progress can be seen in the area of content integration, but much remains to be done. "The curriculum," he says, "is still skewed toward males, particularly those in the dominant group."

A dogged problem that plagues multicultural education is that the public perceives content integration as all it has to offer—and frequently limits its content to the social studies.

"After a recent talk I gave at a school," Banks recollects, "a math teacher said to me: 'What you said is fine for social studies but it has nothing to do with me.' We need to help people move beyond that to deal with the other four dimensions of multicultural education."

That is the importance, he believes, of knowledge construction as one of the five dimensions of multicultural education. "Clearly, math and science teachers both can deal with the knowledge construction process. Many science teachers simply don't realize that science is a product of the cultural context."

Banks explains how knowledge construction can occur, using an historical example. "Franz Boas, the man who really founded scientific anthropology in the U.S., came from Germany where he had been a victim of anti-Semitism. He challenged the notion that Blacks were inferior, and he challenged the existing notions of race. He helped to reconstruct the whole notion of race in America. This is an example of knowledge construction — how he helped to reconstruct the concept of race."

To illustrate what he terms the equity pedagogy dimension, Banks refers to the work of Frances Maher and Mary Kay Tetreault, authors of *The Feminist Classroom*. "They looked at what they call the 'feminist classroom,' where instruction is more interconnected, the teachers are more caring, there is a kind of pedagogy that is feminist and more empowering for women. These pedagogies really change the classroom so that the voices of girls and of kids of color are more listened to and more empowered."

Prejudice reduction remains a constant goal for multicultural education, Banks insists, because of the persistent, malignant nature of prejudice. "Inter-group conflict is still a real problem in our schools. All teachers, no matter what their

discipline, have some obligation to deal with racism, sexism, and all the other 'isms'—including anti-Semitism. We must work on creating more positive racial attitudes."

The dimension that Banks calls "empowering school culture and social structure" is easily illuminated when he refers to the negative effects of tracking and ability grouping. "It is not unusual to find very few kids of color in the gifted program, but a highly disproportionate number of them in the learning disabled or other special education classes. Tracking and grouping is also related to social class. Few low-income kids are in gifted classes. They are highly concentrated in special education classes."

"In a local high school, there are a small number of Black and Asian students. The greatest dream of many of the young women is to be a cheerleader. Yet I knew an African American girl who could never be a cheerleader—even though she was popular—because it was dependent upon the student vote. She could never get enough votes."

He adds: "The kids tended to vote for the blond kids. This was a thoughtless policy, not one that was deliberately mean or vicious."

How might these five dimensions of multicultural education—all of which overlap—be integrated? Banks believes change begins with the self. "Teachers need to think about their own hearts and minds," he says. "I heard a quote the other day: 'We cannot transform the world until we transform ourselves.' We have to think about how multicultural education is about ourselves and not about the Other. A lot of people think it is the study of Blacks, or Indians, and as a result they have Black Day or Indian Morning."

This piecemeal approach to multicultural education is not beneficial, and actually can reinforce people's conceptions of other groups as being different from themselves. Banks

asserts that the whole concept of "the Other" is powerful and potentially destructive.

He says thoughtfully, "I like to share the poem, *The Hangman*, a poem by Ogden that was used when I worked with the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith on its World of Difference project, which is a prejudice reduction project."

"The hangman comes to town and hangs one group. Everyone is silent because they're saying: 'It's the Other, not us.' Then the hangman comes to town and hangs another group. Everyone is silent and indifferent. Finally the hangman comes to town and hangs the last group and there is no one left. He destroys the whole town because people are indifferent, neutral, and focused on the Other."

"Teachers need to think about these things and ask themselves: 'What does this mean to me?' That's the starting place. If we continue to think about the other—the Blacks, the Italians, the Indians—it remains something very distant, and I like to begin with transforming ourselves."

Interrelated to self-transformation, Banks points out, are knowledge and strategies. "For instance, how do we teach about Las Casas and Cortés? A book I just finished reading, Tzvetan Todorov's *The Conquest of America: The Question of The Other* [Harper-Collins, 1982], talks about how Las Casas with the cross was in many ways not that different from Cortés with the sword. In effect, religion was a way of killing the Aztecs and making them white. It was a sweeter way, whereas the sword was the more brutal way."

"I'd like teachers to think about that, and then think about how seeing the Other as part of us can help us to become more human. In Todorov's book, he says that when the conquistadors destroyed the Aztecs, they destroyed part of their own possibilities. That's what I'm trying to get teachers to think about and to understand."

Multicultural education, Banks says, extends beyond a superficial awareness level of cultural and racial differences to encompass a whole way of thinking about the world and the people who inhabit it. "Multicultural education," Banks emphasizes, "is primarily a way of thinking, perceiving, and acting."

"We cannot just tell people to change and expect that they will do it. Teachers need incentives for changing. What will I get if I change? Peggy McIntosh creates study groups within schools so that teachers have support for change. They need this type of support—not just money—but support within the institutional structure."

The difficulties multicultural education confronts in the future include helping people shift their ways of thinking. Reading a quote from Martin Luther King, Banks says: "King said: 'We will live together as brothers and sisters or die separate and apart as strangers.' That really drives home the point. We are in this together, and this is the really critical thing, the barrier that we have to get people to overcome. The extent to which the barriers will be reduced will be related directly to our commitment to reducing them and how hard we work to do so."

What encouragement does Banks offer teachers who may be discouraged by difficult working conditions and the expectation that schools can solve the ills of society? He answers with an eloquent quote. "In a speech to the graduates at Antioch College in 1859, Horace Mann said: 'Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humankind.' Teachers need to understand that every day we can have small victories in the classroom if we touch one heart, one mind, one soul."

He concludes: "We have to keep our eyes on the prize. We may have a small victory with just one kid today, and that is what we have to keep us going."

THE IRON TRIANGLE

ANNE TURNBAUGH LOCKWOOD

What does the future—and past—of American public education look like to a proponent of school effectiveness research? What is the agenda for school effectiveness for the future? How does staff development for effective schools differ from other staff development programs?

For answers to these and other questions, we interviewed Stephen K. Miller, associate professor of Educational Foundations at the University of Louisville. Active in the school effectiveness research field, Miller's current writing focuses on socio-historical and philosophical bases of the American school system as they relate to equity, effective schools, and notions of individual differences. A past program chair of the School Effectiveness SIG of the American Educational Research Association, Miller is a member of the National Association of Secondary Schools Task Force on School Climate, has consulted nationally on school effectiveness and school improvement projects, and served as Executive Director of the Kentucky Career Ladder Commission Pilot Project.

To Stephen Miller, taking stock of the past is an occasion for some pride. Public educators, he believes, should realize that much has been accomplished in this country in the past twenty-five years. At the forefront on his list of accomplishments is the push for equity in schooling. "We have become aware of the need for equity," he begins, "of the need to educate everybody. Twenty-five years ago we saw the beginning of the equity movement with the War on Poverty, but the commitment to it was not as strong."

Another key accomplishment, Miller believes, is an increase in the level of basic skills attained by students across the country. "Although there is

a lot of talk about score decline, we have not only caught up with where we were in the 1970s, but the country is now ahead. While it is true that most states are above the norm, educators need to realize that there is norm creep when people focus on attaining basic skills. When basic skills are the focus, kids will attain them. As they do, the tests are renormed."

He states that another accomplishment—although he cautions that it could sound negative—is the general realization that public education cannot be taken for granted. He says, "We can't make an advance in education and then back off and expect that the next generation will have whatever advances the previous generation did. The focus has to continue, and if it doesn't, we lose whatever we had."

Miller sees the continuing debate over equity versus excellence as related to the need for educators not to rest on their laurels, and is pleased that it has expanded to its present level of discourse. "We used to have the debate tacitly," he says, "but now more and more people are beginning to focus on how we can have equity and excellence at the same time. There is a general consensus that we need to focus on both, not one versus the other."

He points to past assumptions that equity could be attained only at the expense of excellence or efficiency, adding: "In 1975 there was a Brookings Institute piece written by Okun entitled *Equity and Efficiency: The Big Tradeoff*. This piece concluded that with equity comes a tradeoff. Today, we are beginning to understand that there is no tradeoff after all. We cannot have excellence if we do not have equity as well."

He adds: "Some theorists have looked at this as education for the masses versus education for the elite. The reality is that we have never tried to educate everybody at the same level."

The Next Twenty-Five Years

As Miller ponders an agenda for the future, he asks: "Can we get from A to C without stopping at B?" He pauses to explain his notion of A, B, and C. "Picture A as a condition of what schooling has been, that is, there are a few who have been educated in the broadest liberal sense, but overall rote, control-oriented schooling was designed for the masses. Even schooling for the masses was inequitable because a lot of disadvantaged and minority pupils didn't attain mastery of the basic skills."

"If you then travel to B, B would be a significant achievement, but it would still represent schooling for the masses with a different education provided for a few elite students. Everybody at B would now be accomplishing the basic skills, but there would be a big divide between the basic skills and the kind of higher order thinking skills and Bloom's taxonomy that the elite students would get."

"If you went to C, you now have education for all with equity. Obviously, that is a tremendous challenge. The question for policy strategy is: Do we leave A, which is where we have been, and head for B? Or do we aim directly for C and the business of educating everybody?"

Answering his own question, he says firmly: "We must go directly from A to C. In doing so, one of our agendas must be the elimination of tracking, because where ability grouping and tracking are present, there will be differentiation of access to knowledge, of the quality of information, and of the kind of information to which students are exposed. We have to figure out ways in which we can deliver a high-quality, information-based education to all kids and yet accommodate the individual differences that exist."

Diversity among the student population will always be present, Miller points out, and actually will increase rather than diminish. Rather than deploring it, or standing helpless in the face of it, Miller believes that schools can deal with it either by differentiating the curriculum, as has been done traditionally, or by maintaining a common curriculum for all but individualizing the ways in which students with different backgrounds and interests can master it.

Clearly, this is a sea change for teachers who have not been trained to accommodate individual differences in a homogeneous group. "It is much tougher to do this," Miller acknowledges, "but we must move in that direction and help people as much as possible so that they are able to succeed."

The debate over equity versus excellence is clearly one that is dear to Miller's heart. He returns to the notion of excellence, putting a different twist on the whole notion of national standards for content and performance. He believes that the entire concept of excellence needs to be elevated to a new level. "We need to reconsider excellence in standards," he says. "Too often we have assumed that the current levels of excellence are sufficient."

To ground what he means in actual policy, Miller points to the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990, noting: "One of the nice things about living in Kentucky is that I am in the process of living through the Kentucky Reform Act of 1990. One thing to come out of it is that the criterion-referenced levels are higher than what the very best students were doing. Some statisticians, perhaps, make that real."

He explains that the levels established in Kentucky—1 through 4—have been labeled 'novice,' 'apprentice,' 'proficient,' and 'distinguished.' The "distinguished"

category, he notes, was reserved deliberately for world-class achievement, and thus far, its attainment has been beyond the reach of many Kentucky students. "The original pilot test data—in 12th grade math—showed that less than one percent of Kentucky's kids were able to achieve the 'distinguished' level. Another way to think about that is that if only kids in the 99th percentile scored at the 'distinguished' level, then only about two-thirds of that one percent scored at the 'distinguished' level in 12th-grade math on the pilot testing."

"That suggests that we're not only talking about increasing levels of excellence for all kids," he continues, "but we're talking about increasing the standards of excellence for the entire nation. What is happening in Kentucky is being played out in a number of states across the country. The kinds of instruction and testing we have used in the past have not developed kids' thinking abilities or problem-solving skills at the level that will be needed for the future."

The Iron Triangle

What contributions have researchers on school effectiveness made to the current restructuring movement? In his reply, Miller provides a retrospective of the effective schools research, and then carefully differentiates the body of school effectiveness research—his specialty—from what has become known as the effective schools movement. "One of the accomplishments of the effective schools research," he says, "is that it focused on the inside of what I call the iron triangle—the relationship between the teacher and the student as they interact with the curriculum. A lot of the restructuring work that has gone on in the name of reform in the last decade has played around the edges of that iron triangle. People have been concerned with politics, with who controls the curriculum. Those

are not unimportant issues, but to the extent that they remain outside the iron triangle, little will happen in terms of the amount that is learned."

What is the distinction between school effectiveness research and effective schools research? Miller replies: "Many times educational theory, when it becomes a movement, becomes so popularized that the original essence gets lost in the drive to popularize it and make it palatable to the masses. What started off as the effective schools research became popularized over time as the effective schools movement, which became advocacy-based. Much—not all—but much of the research produced by the advocacy movement simply was not good."

"Sam Stringfield and others talk about the distinction between the ongoing school effectiveness research and the advocacy-based movement. While the critics were right in criticizing a lot of the advocacy-based, equity-based reports in the effective schools movement, they discount the fact that research on school effectiveness continued and that many of the researchers themselves were making the same critiques as were the critics of the effective schools movement."

Historically, Miller explains, the effective schools research is a subset of the school effects literature—"literature like the Coleman report," he says. "The Coleman Report was based upon a lot of input factors that were measured primarily in dollars and cents. The report concluded that the most important factors are students' social class and race. And yet there was some evidence that students' sense of control made a difference in terms of students outcomes. It was interesting that the sense of control variable seemed not to be highly related to student background."

"When people like Wilbur Brookover and others started working with this, they discovered qualitative

sorts of things like climate, morale, and teacher expectations. One of the things the effective schools research did was that it documented schools with populations of low-income students, almost 100% minority, yet with high achievement. The researchers asked: What is it about these schools? How are they different? When they figured out how they were different, they saw that it was because of teacher expectations and school climate, as opposed to students' socioeconomic states. Of course, the effective schools research wouldn't have been possible if we hadn't had the large school effects research to start with, and the later input-output research of the '70s and '80s improved because it fed back onto the effective schools research."

Miller credits the effective schools movement with the current emphasis on excellence in schooling. "Along with the minimum competency movement from the '70s," he attests, "the effective schools research was one major contributor to the awareness that attaining basic skills alone was not enough. A common criticism of the effective schools research is that it isn't good because the focus was only on basic skills. That criticism is true. But why is that the case? The effective schools researchers used the only outcomes available, which were based on basic skills. We simply did not have the kinds of authentic assessment and measurement of higher order thinking skills that we have developed in the past few years. To the extent that we have them, school effectiveness researchers will start using them."

Miller applauds the effective schools researchers as "catalysts" for the enormous school reform now taking place across the nation. He elaborates, saying: "The effective schools research and movement made the school the focus of change, rather than the classroom or teacher. That is important, because education has been so individualistic. We have missed the

fact that schools are organizations and need to change as organizations. It is very difficult to get one individual—student or teacher—to change if the organization, the norms, and the conditions within that organization don't change as well. That was the major accomplishment of the effective schools research and movement.

*"The effective
schools research
made the school the
focus of change."*

"Along with that came the recognition that schools are nested organizations," he continues. "Students and teachers are nested within groups that are nested within the classroom; the classroom is nested within the school, the school is nested within the district, and districts are nested within the state and federal arenas. In actuality, there are a variety of different policies that are operative at all those different levels. The effective schools research, because of its focus on organizational theory, gave us a better idea of schools as not only organizations, but nested organizations."

Effective Schools Staff Development

Burgeoning off the effective schools research is the effective schools staff development program [known in the *National Center for Effective Schools*

as the School-Based Instructional Leadership program (SBIL), along with the Management Information System for Effective Schools (MISES).] How does it differ from other staff development programs? Miller replies, "Effective schools staff development focuses on teacher inservice that is collective for that school. This is done in terms of outcomes-based education, normative change, structural change, and also the realization that change is continuous."

He continues with conviction: "You can never reach your zenith. All schools can always improve."

Does Miller see the staff development offered by the effective schools movement as the kind that is needed for the future? "We need to look at incorporating the changes of empowerment and restructuring into it," he responds. "In the best of all worlds, we will be able to combine the insights of school effectiveness with some of the political realities of restructuring."

Miller remains convinced that the key to the future lies in a heavy educational investment in children at the earliest ages possible. "We need to become much more front-loaded," he says. "We have to invest more resources up front if we are going to be able to do the job. We must engage in early childhood education. That is one of the reasons Robert Slavin's 'Success for All' is such a powerful model. It radically reorients the spending, so that it is up front, for kindergartners and first graders, even to the point that they receive one-on-one tutoring. The purpose of this is to get them to read well enough by the time they're in the third grade so that they have a prophylactic that protects them if they live in a disadvantaged community."

He concludes: "If we put the effort into kids up front, they won't develop the kinds of problems with which they come to school now, which are so frustrating to so many teachers."

ENDPAPER

ANNE TURNBAUGH LOCKWOOD

This issue marks the last in a series of publications I have produced for the National Center for Effective Schools since the Fall of 1990—and draws to a close the quarterly, *Focus in Change*, and its companion, *Research and the Classroom*. Over the past four years I have researched and written about a wide variety of topics sustaining current interest on the national educational scene, and have worked to make these issues interesting, lively, and useful to you, the readers of the publications. As this work concludes, I would like to reflect briefly about how it has concretized some truths I learned very early about the value of education.

I was raised, quite literally, in the public schools. My father, a long-time school administrator in the Chicago suburban area, spent his 40-year career as a public servant working for the improvement of education for all children. Some of my earliest memories include attending faculty “teas”—now an artifact of the 1950s—when my mother couldn’t find a babysitter and took me along.

Teachers were family friends; our life as a family revolved around the life of the large suburban high school where my father was principal, and later, the suburban district where he was superintendent. A frequent weekend outing, when I was quite small, was visiting the construction site of what later became Morton West High School—known in the family as “the school your father built.” Many Saturdays, I accompanied my father as he gave speeches to various parent, student, or community groups, or sat in his office reading a book while he did paperwork.

What was life without school? One of those favorite family stories that is recounted at the Thanksgiving dinner table revolves around my narrative of the first day of kindergarten. “All the other fathers,” I reported to the family with astonishment, “work at a place called Western Electric!” In my world, school was the place where fathers and brothers went in the morning. In the ‘50s, most mothers worked at home—but that is another story.

I accepted without question the family commitment to education as an inexorable life force with the power to transcend all kinds of life difficulties. My parents, products of the Great Depression and World War II, seemed to be sustained by their fierce respect for learning in all forms. To insure that their children read—and read a lot—they did not allow a television in the house until we moved into a house when I was a teenager that had one built into a wall of the family room.

The landscape of my childhood was dominated by books and by people reading and talking about books and the life of schools. I don’t remember minding this too much, although there were times, I’m sure, when I wished I could have joined in the playground chatter about “The Mickey Mouse Club” or “The Three Stooges.”



Instead, my mother started me on Charles Dickens practically as soon as I could read, and I remember wending my way through many pages studded with new and sometimes frustratingly complicated words—dictionary close by.

I remember well my father coming home from a meeting of high school English teachers shaking his head. “I told them,” he reported at the dinner table, “that *David Copperfield* is not too difficult for high school students. After all, I have a third grader at home who is reading it!” He didn’t seem to take any particular pride in this, but

instead pushed the high school faculty to form higher standards for all students.

My mother used to tell me, “An education is the one thing in life that cannot be taken away from you.” She exhorted me to make the most of piano lessons and every opportunity that came my way to extend what I knew.

Dismayed because one of my grade school teachers was not sufficiently knowledgeable about sentence structure, my mother set about remedying the teacher’s perceived deficiencies with a vigorous after-school program of her own making—one I despised—in which I reluctantly diagrammed a multitude of sentences at the kitchen table. I don’t remember much about the exercise except the relentless scrutiny to which my work was subjected, but I do remember that both my parents cared tremendously that both their children learned.

Writing and researching these publications has been a wonderful way to learn and to share what I have learned from people all over the country—some with international reputations and others whose admirable efforts have not afforded them the same recognition—to bring their viewpoints and their stories to you. I thank each one of you for continuing your support of these publications over the past four years, for calling and writing with your reactions to their content, and for buying back issues for your workshops and classes.

As most people know, there is a cyclical quality to much of life. Dinner table conversations about education and books continue today in my home with my husband Alan, a professor of education here at the University of Wisconsin. Many times I have related to him the search for some interesting nugget of information—something I could share with all of you. And at family gatherings, my father—now retired—frequently questions me about my work or shares an article from a journal he is reading.

Thanks are due to Peter Manesis, the talented artist who has been my creative partner and colleague throughout this series of publications, always devising imaginative and beautiful ways to showcase the articles and ideas we have worked to bring you.

To all of you, best wishes for continued success.

COMMENTARY

FLORENCE L. JOHNSON

OUR FEATURED EDUCATORS and researchers have presented a variety of viewpoints concerning the accomplishments and future direction of public education in America. These perspectives, ranging from the politics of various reform efforts to the dilemma faced by teachers, are timely and should serve as a basis for charting future change. While these issues will no doubt impact future education in many ways, the hope placed in teachers' individual and collective commitment as the key to success for public school students seems most promising of all.

To help teachers meet this challenge, teacher education programs and school districts must work strategically to improve teachers' comfort in their role as educators. Although many attributes are needed, one major area is professional development to improve teachers' skills and knowledge in a wide range of areas associated with high achieving effective schools and classrooms.

Research (Stallings, 1988) linking professional development to teachers' feelings of efficacy and student performance is clear. To be successful, teachers must formulate and continue to renew their role as professionals. They must become curriculum and instruction innovators, learn to work in teams with their colleagues, master the art of conflict resolution, understand how to work with students' families, and develop a belief that all children can learn. Training should focus first on the development of professional beliefs and attitudes. Teachers need to be aware of the Effective Schools literature (Brophy & Good, 1978; Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schuster, & Wisenbaker, 1979) which shows how their beliefs and attitudes about children, not only influence the level of expectation held for learning, but also determines the amount and quality of instruction provided, significantly affecting achievement. Higher standards of instruction are provided for students perceived as high achievers than for those perceived to be low achievers.

A second area of need is training to develop technical and pedagogical skills. The research is clear that unless we invest in our teachers to help them improve their pedagogical techniques so they may deliver instruction in a more meaningful way, the academic achievement of our students will not significantly improve. Teachers must be helped to believe in their own abilities as professional educators and understand the process of teaching and learning. They need to know that effective teaching is more than merely knowing the content; they must also present content in a manner which actively involves students so they become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and able to apply knowledge to broader societal issues. A high percentage of the variance in achievement may be explained by what Haberman (1991) terms "pedagogy of poverty versus good teaching." The pedagogy of poverty, more often practiced in low-income



schools, involves unengaged fragmented activities which fail to create meaning and motivation for students.

Teachers need competencies in working with our diverse student population, especially in urban schools. Because many of these students enter school without adequate basic skills and teachers are not equipped to meet their needs, students become disillusioned with school early and drop out altogether. Training is needed to help teachers develop a variety of intervention strategies and group activities to strengthen students' self-confidence and skills acquisition.

The challenges to educators, decision-makers, and researchers are vast as we look to the future of public education. Wonderful ideas have been presented about our past efforts and what we can expect for the future. I suggest that we rely on successful research supported practices that improve educational quality and equity for all students, regardless of their individual differences, while we search for even more effective strategies. Given the increasingly changing demographics of our country and schools, children, who have not been provided a good education in the past, must be educated in the future if our society is expected to survive. We must not embrace educational innovations that seek to exclude large numbers of children from the chance for academic excellence while focusing on only a select few. Over the years, the Effective Schools research has demonstrated that high quality education is possible for all children (Bullard & Taylor, 1993). To be successful, educators must work from the point of a shared mission and measurable goals and objectives that clearly include success for all. It is essential that the principal, as an instructional leader, provide support and encouragement for staff while yet holding them accountable for educating every child. The school must work as a team with clear roles and responsibilities and make data driven decisions about student progress. The Effective Schools Process, developed by the National Center for Effective Schools, has been successful in helping schools and districts across America and in several foreign countries develop the capacity for systemic change. Teachers can benefit from this process.

References

- Brookover, W.B., Beady, C., Flood, P., Schuster, J., & Wisenbaker, J. (1979). *School social system and student achievement: Schools can make a difference*. New York: J.F. Bergin Co. distributed by Praeger Publishers.
- Brophy, J.F., & Good. (1978). Advances in teacher research. *The Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 15(1), 1-7.
- Bullard, P., & Taylor, B.O. (1993). *Keepers of the dream: The triumph of effective schools*. Excelsior! Chicago.
- Haberman, M. (1991). The pedagogy of poverty versus good teaching. *Phi Delta Kappan*, December 73 (4), 290-294.
- Stallings, J. (1988). *The Houston teacher academy*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Assn., New Orleans.

The Future of Public Education

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Madison, Wisconsin
Permit No. 1622

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

WISCONSIN CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON

1025 W. JOHNSON STREET, SUITE 685

MADISON, WI 53706

Director

FLORENCE L. JOHNSON

Communications Director

ANNE TURNBAUGH LOCKWOOD

Program Assistant

JANET SHORT

Consultant

BARBARA O. TAYLOR

Research Assistance

DAVID CHAWSZCZEWSKI

Design

PETER MANESIS

Typography

BRAD NEILIS

IMDC GRAPHICS, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MADISON

ERIC Clearinghouse on Educ. Mgt
Univ. of Oregon
1787 Agate St.
Eugene, OR 97403

complimentary

Agate Hall

No. 16

©1994, Board of Regents, University of Wisconsin Madison